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ABSTRACT

This report on the public perception of higher education is based on a review of 30 recent public opinion polls. The review found: (1) higher education enjoys a reservoir of goodwill; (2) a college degree is seen as an essential credential for success; (3) the public is broadly committed to equity, but as an income issue and not gender- or race-specific; (4) public goodwill is tempered by growing worry about cost; and (5) consequently, the public sees a role for government in education similar to that in health care financing. The public continues to believe that higher education is one of the most important tasks of society, that higher education equals less crime, and despite low support for racial preferences in general, 73 percent of those polled support financial aid for members of minority groups. There is worry that college athletics are out-of-control and this perception threatens to undermine public confidence in institutions of higher education. However, the main concern of the public is the high cost of higher education and the financial barrier to college for many. The public also believes that government should have a role in funding and that a service requirement could be a requirement for student aid. (JLS)

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Goodwill and Growing Worry: Public Perceptions of American Higher Education

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Goodwill and Growing Worry: Public Perceptions of American Higher Education

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Washington, DC

A Report for
the American Council on Education

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Preface

This is the first of three reports on public perceptions of higher education developed for the Board of Directors of the American Council on Education. The project was initiated at the request of ACE's Office of Governmental Relations and Office of Public Affairs to provide a better picture of public opinion as higher education entered a new period of constrained budgets at the federal, state, and local levels.

This first report was presented in the form of a briefing for the Board at ACE's 75th Annual Meeting in San Diego, California, in January 1993. It summarizes a comprehensive review of more than 30 recent public opinion polls that touched on higher education. Among the highlights of the findings:

- Higher education enjoys a huge reservoir of public goodwill. The public believes higher education is good for the economy, good for society, and good for its students.
- A college degree is seen as an essential credential for success in life and work. The degree is as important today as a high school diploma was yesterday.
- The public is broadly committed to equity, but sees it as a function of income, not of race or gender.
- Public goodwill is accompanied by growing worry about costs. "Sticker shock" is a real phenomenon in the public mind, and the public believes that costs are escalating beyond the reach of the middle class.

- Consequently, the public sees government as an important part of the solution to the cost problem. Education, like health care, is an essential public good that people believe they no longer can afford. Thus, they say, the government needs to step in by helping to foot the bill or by controlling costs.

This report is issued against a backdrop of American higher education wrestling with major new challenges. U.S. society is increasingly knowledge-intensive and dominated by advanced technologies; higher education institutions must provide the skills necessary for students to compete in the global marketplace. Additionally, colleges and universities face escalating costs, decreasing funding from government and private sources, and a host of highly publicized difficulties involving institutional finance and management.

Goodwill and Growing Worry

The impetus for the research described in this report—an examination of public perceptions of American higher education—developed from a sense that the 1990s were shaping up to be watershed years for American colleges and universities. The 1990s dawned with higher education in perhaps its worst financial shape of the last 50 years. Following three decades of growth in enrollments and financial support, traditional enrollment pools seemed to be exhausted and the nation's colleges and universities increasingly were being forced to justify every dollar sought from public and private sources.

At the same time, higher education institutions were confronting the accumulated changes of the last several decades that affected their enterprise as well as the population they serve. Growth in the number of unprepared, or poorly prepared, incoming students, a revolution in technology and telecommunications, and demands for better work force preparation had combined to alter dramatically society's expectations for higher education.

In addition to the dilemma posed by rising expectations and diminishing resources, the academic world also faced significant changes in the political environment. Higher education was a very visible issue in the 1992 presidential election, and public criticism of budgetary and other higher education issues had been growing. American leaders voiced concerns about access to higher education and appropriate levels of support for the academic enterprise. They also were troubled by accounts of campuses torn by arguments about "political correctness," of faculty deserting the classroom for research, and of financial irregularities on some campuses.

This study grew out of a sense that more light needed to be cast on the political dimensions of higher education's dilemma. If the nation's

colleges and universities can better grasp the public's attitudes, they may become better prepared to survive in the new political environment.

The methodology for the study was straightforward and quite simple. The University of Connecticut maintains a remarkable database on public opinion through the Roper Data Center on Survey Research. The Roper Data Center contains the results of several thousand surveys (all in the public domain) conducted since World War II—surveys by most of the major polling organizations in the United States, including Roper, Yankelovich, Harris, Gallup, the ABC, NBC, and CBS news organizations, and national newspapers, are included. These surveys cover every conceivable aspect of domestic public opinion—from what kinds of clothes Americans prefer to how well they think the president is performing his job; from the quality of health care in the United States to the quality of American public education.

Among the public opinion surveys in the data center are about 60 conducted between 1989 and 1992 that asked at least one question touching on higher education. This analysis draws on questions from 30 major polls conducted during that period by many different organizations. Surveys that included only one or two questions about higher education—or that touched on higher education only in passing—were excluded from the analysis.

Each of the 30 surveys, whether conducted in person or by telephone, includes a nationally representative sample of the American population. A few of these polls surveyed 999 people or fewer. Most surveyed between 1,000 and 1,500 people. Several surveyed the attitudes of 2,500 people or more, and the largest involved 7,500 respondents. Many of the larger surveys over-sampled special populations, e.g., African-American adults, to gain better insight into the diversity of public opinion on selected issues such as access, equity, and affirmative action.

Appendix A includes information about each of the specific surveys in terms of sample size, when the surveys began and ended, when the results were reported, whether the surveys were conducted in person or by phone, and whether or not sub-samples of special population groups—by age, race, or gender, for example—are available.

The analysis of these 30 polls can be summed up in six propositions:

1. American higher education enjoys a huge reservoir of public goodwill.

2. A college degree is thought to be as essential to a young person starting out in life today as a high school diploma was yesterday.

3. The American people support access and equity as functions of income.

4. People are worried that college sports are out of control.

5. The public is shocked at the costs of financing a college education.

6. Growing worry about costs is accompanied by growing interest in government solutions.

A Huge Reservoir of Public Goodwill

Academic leaders who are convinced that recent criticisms of higher education have eroded public confidence in the enterprise may be surprised to learn that the dominant attitude of the American people, as revealed in these polls, is overwhelmingly positive. Higher education enjoys an enormous reservoir of goodwill from the American public. The American people like almost everything about higher education. They think it's good for the economy. They believe the nation's colleges and universities help produce good citizens. They believe that young people starting out in life today absolutely must have a college degree. They support university research and are dazzled by its progress in medical science and high technology.

This positive picture of widespread goodwill is evident across the 30 polls. Some 1990 findings from the Gallup organization are representative of the whole:

- 93 percent of Americans believe university research makes important national contributions;[1]
- 91 percent think that one of the important things colleges and universities do is help produce contributing members of society;[2]
- 87 percent agree that colleges help make America more competitive.[3]

These figures aggregate the responses of people who agree with the propositions "very strongly" and "strongly," and are extraordinarily high positive numbers. Essentially, the poll represents a public consensus that higher education is a significant national asset.

More detailed findings on higher education and the economy, the value of academic science and technology, and its contributions to society illuminate both the broad sweep of public support and the relatively sophisticated nature of that support in terms of understanding academic contributions to the quality of American life.

The Economy

Figure 1, Perceptions of Higher Education and the Economy, displays selected findings from several surveys. It reveals that huge majorities of Americans believe higher education is a critical asset as the nation struggles to address its economic difficulties.

Figure 1
Perceptions of Higher Education and the Economy

- 88 percent of Americans believe that providing job training is one of the most important contributions of colleges and universities.[4]
- 87 percent believe that if more Americans had a college degree, the ability of the United States to compete economically with the rest of the world would improve.[5]
- 79 percent think that universities and other education institutions should play the most important role (40 percent) or a very important role (39 percent) in helping to improve the nation's economic competitiveness.[6]

These figures represent a remarkable level of confidence on the part of the American people in their academic institutions. By margins of eight and nine to one, the public believes the nation's colleges and universities are important to the future—both for themselves and for the larger society.

Other poll results confirm this level of confidence. According to the Gallup organization, on the question of which group is perceived to be in the best position to lead the nation in developing new technologies—colleges and universities or American business—the results are virtually dead even. Thirty-five percent of respondents favor "businesses and corporations" and 34 percent favor "colleges and universities."[7]

These survey results lead to a conclusion that may surprise academic leaders: In the public's mind, the issue of the economy is a huge winner for higher education. The public does not separate higher education from the nation's larger economic well-being, but rather views it as integral to the competitive edge of the United States.

Science and Technology

The poll findings on science and technology are not as surprising as those on the economy; however, they are equally impressive and encouraging. The public has a firm grasp on the connection between higher education and the nation's progress in science and technology.

Figure 2, Perceptions of Academic Science and Technology, indicates that huge majorities of Americans—80 to 90 percent or more—agree that higher education is responsible for much of the nation's scientific success.

Figure 2

Perceptions of Academic Science and Technology

- 94 percent of those polled believe that if more Americans were college educated, advances in science, medicine, and technology would follow.[8]
- 93 percent agree that colleges and universities play an important role in conducting research to help solve medical, scientific, social, and other national problems.[9]
- 82 percent think that if colleges and universities receive more government funding, some or most of it should be spent on research to help solve medical, scientific, social, and other national problems.[10]

Proportions this high are really quite remarkable in survey research—it is exceedingly rare to find an issue on which nine of ten Americans agree. These figures represent virtually universal agreement among Americans about the valuable contributions of higher education to science and technology.

The polls even indicate that the public is inclined to trust academic judgments over the judgments of other experts about public policy implications in some scientific areas. For example, in making decisions about endangered species, people turn more frequently to university experts than to experts from environmental groups or the government, a Roper poll found.[11]

The same poll indicates that a plurality of Americans (39 percent) believes that university biologists should decide which endangered species are most important, compared with 11 percent who would entrust

government officials to decide and 29 percent who would place their trust in environmental groups. This particular finding suggests that academic science and scientists enjoy a very high level of credibility amongst the general public.

An interesting sidebar to the findings on science and technology shown in Figure 2 is that "medicine" or medical progress appears in each question; the presence of issues related to health care undoubtedly contributed significantly to the very positive findings.

Many of these polls were completed when health care reform—accompanied by a sharp focus by the national media on the huge number of people without health insurance—was developing as one of the dominant domestic policy issues in the United States. Adding medicine to the list of concerns of academic science undoubtedly reminded many respondents of the numerous contributions to medical progress made by university research.

Perhaps even more important, university hospitals are widely judged as the institutions that give the most advanced and up-to-date care. Given a choice between hospitals administered by a local agency of government, by a profit-oriented company with headquarters elsewhere, or by a local university, large numbers of Americans prefer the university facility. The issue is not simply a matter of who administers the hospital or whether it is designed to provide returns to its investors; it is rather that the public has come to expect first-rate care at university hospitals, and that many people believe these institutions employ the latest techniques, technology, and research.

Contributions to Society

The survey findings provide strong support for the proposition that the public's goodwill extends far beyond narrow issues of economic competitiveness or personal well-being. Americans appear genuinely to understand that the nation's colleges and universities play a large and important social role.

The poll review indicates that the public seems to view this larger role in terms of two broad areas (see Figure 3). First, the nation's colleges and universities help develop good citizens—an outcome that is considered to be an important function of academic institutions. Second, the public believes that production of these good citizens leads, in turn, either to a reduction of serious social problems or to the ability to attack such problems.

Once again, these findings, produced in 1990, emerged after more than a decade of rising public anxiety about major social problems in American life—including crime, drugs, and homelessness. Although possession of a college degree does not inoculate anyone against these difficulties,

most Americans understand that, on average, the college-educated have a better chance of avoiding these problems than high school dropouts. Although the public may be grasping at straws in the hope that higher education will solve these dilemmas, it is clear that the public understands and approves of the critical social role the nation's colleges and universities play in helping to create a nation of civility and respect.

Figure 3
Perceptions of Contributions to Society

- **91 percent of Americans believe that educating 18- to 22-year-olds to be contributing members of society is one of the important tasks of colleges.[12]**
- **83 percent believe that if more people were college educated, the nation's ability to solve social problems such as crime, drugs, and homelessness would improve.[13]**
- **72 percent believe that if colleges and universities receive additional money, some or most of it should be spent educating 18- to 22-year-olds to be contributing members of society.[14]**

Comparison with K–12 Education

These poll findings appear to demonstrate the public's conviction that higher education is one of the engines that drive America. It supports the economy. It makes important contributions to knowledge. It advances medicine, science, and technology. And, it helps improve the quality of American life.

The significance of this conviction contrasts markedly with the public's low regard for public education from kindergarten through grade 12 (K–12). The public attitude toward elementary and secondary education is almost schizophrenic. People are inclined to believe the schools their own children attend are wonderful, and they give their own schools very high marks. However, they believe the schools attended by everybody else's children are really quite terrible, and they give K–12 education, in general, very poor marks.

This schizophrenia aside, the public generally is not impressed with the performance of the nation's elementary and secondary schools. People believe that schools are neither preparing young people well for the future

nor providing students with the skills they will need in the emerging high-tech economy.

For example:

- 68 percent of Americans believe that public schools are doing either a poor job or only a fair job of providing young people with the skills needed for success in the working world.[15]
- Only 25 percent think that public schools do a good job of preparing children for the future.[16]
- Only 22 percent believe the quality of education and job training in public schools is either good or excellent.[17]

In short, seven or eight out of ten Americans are inclined to speak very positively about American higher education, but, by similar margins, to express negative opinions about the nation's public schools. The impressive public support for higher education is startling in contrast to the well-formed negative public impression of elementary and secondary education. The conclusion is self-evident: The public makes a distinction between K–12 education and higher education, and colleges and universities have not been tarred with the same brush of public dissatisfaction that taints the nation's schools.

A Degree Today Is an Essential Credential

The second broad generalization is that Americans believe a college degree has assumed the same importance as that attached to the high school diploma a generation or two ago. People are certain their children must obtain an undergraduate degree if they are to succeed in today's world.

The results of a 1990 poll conducted by Yankelovich, Clancy, and Shulman for *Time Magazine* and the Cable News Network (CNN) are typical of many findings.[18] The study reported that four out of five respondents believe that young people starting out in life today have little chance for success without a college education—a striking finding. A generation ago, young people were advised that success in life depended on completing high school. Today, 80 percent of the public believes that reaching the American dream depends on completing college. The nation's colleges and universities, in short, are providing a service for which there is an enormous public demand, and which is viewed as the passport to a decent job and a better standard of living.

In fact, according to the same poll, slightly more than two-thirds of Americans believe that the main reason to go to college is to receive job training. By contrast, only 17 percent of the public considers "becoming broadly educated" as the principal reason to go to college, and even fewer,

just 13 percent, cite "personal development." At the same time, the poll indicates that most Americans are not as impressed with the importance of graduate or professional degrees: 42 percent of those who stress the importance of a college degree also think that young people today need a postgraduate degree. Support for undergraduate programs is very strong and is based largely on people's hopes and aspirations for their children and grandchildren, and for the children of their friends, neighbors, and relatives.

Second, similar support for the value of postgraduate education can be found in only about one-third of the general population. This proportion includes most adults who, themselves, hold at least an undergraduate college degree (about one-quarter of all Americans). Presumably, many of these degree holders now understand that their career opportunities and satisfaction might have been enhanced had they continued their education. But significantly, few people who do not possess a college degree can understand the value—either to individuals or to the larger society—of postgraduate work.

Finally, the public's reasons for supporting higher learning differ dramatically from the views expressed by most academicians. Most academic leaders and faculty members would, without hesitation, state that two of the most important reasons to go to college are to become "more broadly educated" and to experience the "personal growth" involved with the undergraduate experience. Most members of the public, on the other hand, offer a pragmatic, utilitarian view of the value of a college education: Its major purpose is job preparation and career advancement.

Access and Equity Are Functions of Income

The third proposition is encouraging in many respects, but discouraging in others. The general public is deeply committed to access and equity for all needy students, but it defines equity as a function of income, not one of race, class, or gender.

The United States has always prided itself on being a generous society. Many analysts and observers, of course, question that perception—pointing to a long list of powerful, historic injustices that belie this attractive self-image, even arguing that the "decade of greed" label attached to the 1980s more accurately represents the dynamics of the American economy.

The polls in this review indicate that faith in American generosity is not misplaced. By overwhelming majorities, Americans believe that no deserving student should be denied the opportunity to attend college simply because he or she cannot afford it.

A 1989 Gallup poll, for example, indicates that 83 percent of the public supports providing additional state or federal assistance to qualified students who cannot afford to pay for college.[9] In fact, as this report

indicates later, under the general topic of college costs, this proportion is very close to that of Americans who worry about paying for the college expenses of their own children. In calling for aid to students who cannot afford to attend college, many of these respondents are supporting help for people in their own situations. Nevertheless, even assuming that large numbers of these respondents are middle- or upper-middle-income citizens, their support for public student aid programs represents powerful political backing for low-income students hoping to finance a college education.

A fascinating corollary of this attitude is that equity is defined by academics in terms markedly different from those used by the general public. Most higher education leaders define equity around race, ethnicity, and gender. But for most Americans, equity is defined strictly as an issue of income.

A surprisingly large number of poll items reviewed in this study revolve around equity concerns such as affirmative action, political correctness, and preferential treatment in jobs or admission to higher education—all of which have entered public discourse in recent years. Figure 4 presents selected major findings.

Figure 4
Perceptions of Equity Issues

- 23 percent of all Americans believe that minorities are discriminated against in college admissions.[20]
- 10 percent of women think women experience such discrimination.[21]
- 76 percent of Americans oppose providing a preference to minorities in admissions to make up for past discrimination.[22]
- Wide gaps were found in perceptions of efforts to help racial minorities: 19 percent of white Americans support preferences for African-American applicants; 48 percent of African-American respondents support such preferences.[23]
- Despite generally low levels of support for racial preferences, 73 percent of Americans support financial aid for members of minority groups.[24]

The findings are surprising not only because of their implications, but also because so many survey questions focused on such volatile issues. This review covered polls conducted between 1989 and 1992. During that period, civil rights legislation—including special programs and set-asides for minority Americans—was hotly debated in the nation's capital as well as in many state capitals and other cities.

The volatility of these issues encouraged many pollsters to include items about them in their ongoing work—both to plumb public attitudes and to help opinion leaders and politicians trying to understand the public mood.

The poll results provide perceptions of the general public about discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, or gender. The results provide no evidence, one way or the other, about whether or not discrimination exists—they simply reflect public views.

In fact, where one stands on the issue of discrimination often depends on where one sits. A 1991 Gallup poll set out to explore differences in perceptions between minority and majority Americans. As Figure 4 indicates, only 19 percent of white Americans support a preference for African-American applicants in admissions decisions, but 48 percent of African Americans support such a preference.

Although polls in this complicated area can help reveal public attitudes, they cannot explore fully the complexities of the issues involved. Figure 4 reveals that about one-quarter of all Americans agree that minorities have been discriminated against in college admissions; three-quarters of Americans do not agree. Presumably, that three-quarters is the same three-quarters of all Americans who oppose providing a preference to minorities in admissions to make up for past discrimination.

However, the issue does not end there. Despite the lack of support for racial preferences in admissions among the broad population, almost three-quarters (73 percent) of all Americans report that they favor, or favor strongly, special college scholarships for "black children who maintain good grades."[25]

Based on these survey results, it appears clear that the general public is uncomfortable with the idea of preferences based on race or gender. This is true in both college admissions and business hiring practices. There can be no doubt that politicians who criticized affirmative action during this period as an effort to establish "quotas," or as "reverse discrimination" and the like, knew exactly what they were doing. They were pushing a very hot political button.

On the other hand, it also is clear that substantial public support—about three out of four people—exists for special financial assistance,

including scholarships, for minority youngsters who earn good grades. It should be pointed out that the public also supports setting aside funds for majority youngsters who earn good grades. To the extent that family income is the problem, large proportions of the American people do not believe that anyone should be denied the opportunity to attend college simply because they cannot afford it. Americans support special efforts to help people pay for the costs of college attendance, regardless of race.

College Sports Are Out of Control

Survey findings on public perceptions of intercollegiate athletics are equally troubling. A series of polls conducted between 1989 and 1993 by Louis Harris and Associates revealed a public deeply disenchanted with the conduct of big-time college sports programs.[26] More than three-quarters of Americans (78 percent) agreed that intercollegiate athletics were out of control, with many respondents identifying "money greed" and close association with commercial television as particular problems.

One of the more interesting aspects of the polls was the revelation that large majorities of trustees, university presidents, and faculty members also agreed that athletics had grown beyond all proportions on campus. Perhaps not surprisingly, athletics directors and coaches were far less likely to share this opinion.

These findings appeared as major campuses across the nation were being wracked by accusations of non-compliance with rules, as well as serious allegations about recruiting abuses and questions about the behavior of some athletes and coaches. At the same time, highly publicized annual reports from the National Collegiate Athletic Association indicated that less than one-half of all athletes (men and women in all sports) received a diploma within five years. The graduation rates for many major men's programs were far worse—in the typical Division I university, only 33 percent of basketball players and 37 percent of football players graduated within five years of enrolling.

These figures prompted internal and external efforts aimed at sports reform. The NCAA, under the leadership of its Presidents' Commission and in response to prompting from the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics, developed new academic eligibility requirements for incoming athletes and stiffer "progress to degree" requirements. The American people apparently approved of these developments, sensing, the Knight Commission observed, the "highly visible pace of reform in recent years."[27]

Like the other public concerns cited in this report, public perceptions of intercollegiate athletics are in continuous flux and require ongoing attention. It appears that members of the general public make a distinction in their own minds between intercollegiate athletics, on the one hand, and the academic and social mission of the institution on the other. They appear to feel that athletics programs are self-sustaining, self-justifying enterprises on campus. Although they report quite negative opinions about the operations of big-time sports programs, that does not appear to affect their attitudes about the academic value of the institutions.

Nonetheless, the Knight Commission defined the importance of this issue when it warned that public concern about athletics threatened to undermine confidence in the academic enterprise and called on college presidents to find the "will, courage, and perseverance" to maintain the momentum for reform. In its final report, the commission cautioned that "Reform is not a destination, but a process—a race without a finish."

Growing Worry: Sticker Shock

The next proposition gets to the very heart of the public's major concern about higher education: "sticker shock." This issue should come as no surprise to any academic leader. Annual reports from The College Board revealing that tuition hikes regularly outpace cost-of-living increases make headlines across the country each year. Reports of public dissatisfaction with this situation are particularly frequent when, as often happened during the 1980s, costs increase at rates twice that of inflation. This phenomenon became acute in the early 1990s—state appropriations for public institutions declined for the first time since World War II and state colleges and universities responded with sharp tuition hikes.

Although the issue may not be new, the extent and depth of growing public anger about this situation, as revealed by these polls, is startling. "Sticker shock" is a genuine phenomenon on Main Street. When people face the prospect of financing a college education today, many become paralyzed by anxiety about how to cover the costs.

By margins of seven and eight to one, the public reports that college is too expensive, is not a good value for the money, and is rapidly pricing itself out of the reach of all but the wealthy. These findings represent consistent results from half a dozen polls conducted over a three-year period by different polling organizations, including the National Opinion Research Center, Princeton Survey Research Associates, Gallup, Willard and Shulman, and ABC News and the *Washington Post*. (See Figure 5, page 14.)

Figure 5
Perceptions About College Costs

- Only 12 percent of Americans describe college tuition as a good value for the money[28] and 77 percent think that college tuition is overpriced.[29]
- 91 percent believe that most people cannot afford to go to college today without financial aid.[30]
- 89 percent think that by the year 2000, it will be harder for parents to afford college for their children.[31]
- 84 percent believe that in ten years, it will be more difficult for young people to afford to go to college.[32]
- 77 percent of those who are saving for higher education find it difficult to do so.[33]
- 65 percent say they worry a great deal about the fact that a good college education is becoming too expensive.[34]

These figures should set off alarms in the office of every college president and trustee in the United States. They are alarming for several reasons. The specific percentages in Figure 5, large as they are, are the least of the problems. These six items are simply a manifestation of a larger public dissatisfaction, often described as "middle-class anger."

Public opinion experts increasingly are convinced that many Americans believe they have been cheated out of the fruits of their labor. Although they followed conventional rules and did what they thought was expected of them, they feel the economic system has failed them and now they must struggle to maintain their middle-class lifestyle. Their jobs are no longer secure. Access to medical care is in jeopardy. Inflation threatens their retirement security. Property taxes keep rising, but the quality of services received in return—particularly in the local schools—appears to deteriorate. Prospects for their children are troublesome. Now, covering the cost of their children's college attendance is increasingly problematic.

This "middle-class anger" has focused on several concerns. The most prominent target in the early 1990s was the health care system. Academic officials must face the likelihood that the next target will be the nation's higher education system.

Higher education leaders will make an enormous mistake if they assume that the poll results displayed in Figure 5 represent nothing more than the quantification of an age-old complaint about costs from the parents of college students. The truth is that paying for the expenses of a college education is a major financial concern for today's family. This truth is driven home by some unusual findings from a 1990 survey by Princeton Survey Research Associates.[35] The surveyors interviewed more than 3,000 adults about their general financial worries. The responses are revealing and highly relevant to higher education.

Anxiety about health care, primarily the costs of a major illness, is in a league of its own. Twenty-eight percent of Americans list health care expenses as their major worry. Housing costs follow—17 percent of the respondents worry about meeting their monthly mortgage or rental payments.

The next three items are lumped so closely together—at between 12 and 14 percent—that they are virtually indistinguishable: (1) the costs of long-term care for an elderly relative; (2) putting enough money aside for retirement; and (3) financing a college education.

In fact, depending on one's age, income, and career progress, and the size of one's family, these four issues are nearly universal day-to-day worries. Many people lie awake at night worrying about medical bills for a sick spouse or child, taking care of an elderly parent, covering the mortgage or monthly rent, or wondering if enough is being set aside for retirement purposes—if, indeed, Social Security will still exist when they retire. These are daily bread-and-butter issues for many families, and there is every reason to believe the survey tapped public sentiments fairly accurately.

Now the costs of paying for college have moved into this category of universal financial concern. And, of course, many families face steep tuition payments for not only one child, but two or more, often at the same time. Even with financial aid, families' difficulties in realizing their hopes of educating their children are brought sharply into focus by one simple statistic. In 1992, the median family income in the United States—for families with and without children, for single-parent families, and for families with two or more wage earners—was about $33,000. That is, half the families in the United States had an income above that level; half had an income below it. How many of these families could afford to send just one child to a four-year public institution without substantial assistance? Assuming an average annual cost (for tuition, fees, books, incidental expenses, and room and board) at a four-year public institution at about $10,000, such an expense—for just one child—threatens 30 percent or more of the income of families in the bottom half of the income distribution.

When the general public complains about college costs, therefore, its level of concern is justifiably high. For most people, the cost of tuition is not a minor issue. It is not a question of juggling annoying bills or deferring the purchase of a desirable, but not essential, consumer good. It is a question of how to pay for something they consider to be absolutely vital to their children's future—and their concern equals the anxiety they experience when facing mortgage or rent payments, retirement savings, or caring for elderly parents.

Government Must Help

Finally, despite all of the anti-government rhetoric of the last ten or 15 years, the American public strongly believes that the government has a legitimate role to play in helping families cope with the growing costs of higher education.

Poll results in this area are clear and unambiguous. Because of worry about costs, Americans believe that government should help most people pay for college. The public responds to candidates and political platforms promising to help cover these costs, and it strongly supports student aid. People are not asking for something in return for nothing; they believe national service is a very good idea.

It should be made clear that these findings do not reveal how public funds should be used in terms of public and private institutions of higher education. That is, if the amount of money available for financial aid were limited, these poll results do not shed light on whether the public believes it should be restricted to public institutions or to private institutions. In fact, national figures on such issues are likely to be highly misleading locally. In many parts of the nation, e.g. the Midwest and West, the public is likely to believe that the highest quality institution in the state is the flagship public university. In other regions, e.g. the East and parts of the South, quality is likely to be perceived as in elite, private institutions.

Figure 6 reveals the depth of the public's affection for politicians willing to help cover college costs. People give nearly universal support for most forms of federal and state financial assistance for students.

Although surprising at first blush, the extent of public support for student aid can be understood easily against the backdrop of the public's sticker shock. As noted earlier, more than 90 percent of Americans believe they cannot afford to send their children to college without financial assistance. Figure 6 indicates that more than 90 percent of Americans also support additional financial aid programs of all kinds—the very programs they report they need when discussing their own inability to cover costs.

Figure 6

Perceptions About Government's Role

- 93 percent of Americans support the provision of more government-sponsored low-interest loans.[36]
- 94 percent support more work/study programs.[37]
- 94 percent support more scholarships and grants.[38]
- 83 percent support more state and federal assistance.[39]

While self-interest clearly plays a role in this support for federal and state student financial assistance, the strong public affirmation of a government role in this area also is related to the belief of a majority of Americans that government should help citizens pay for essential services they cannot afford. A 1989 CBS poll found that a majority of Americans (56 percent) believe it is the responsibility of the government to help those who do not earn enough to pay for services such as health care, day care, or college tuition.[40]

Indeed, despite rhetoric about "taxpayer revolts," the same poll showed that two-thirds of Americans (65 percent) believe the federal government should help people who cannot afford it pay the costs of a college education, even if this involves a cost to be borne by taxpayers.

Whatever the origins of this support—altruism or self-interest—higher education leaders should not lose sight of the fact that support for federal and state student financial assistance is very strong. Much of that support is generated by the middle class, providing a major political asset for higher education. That is, public concern about financial aid issues and access to higher education equals concern about access to health care and access to affordable child care for working parents.

Financial Aid and Deficit Reduction

How does public support for financial aid square with equally strong public sentiment in favor of reducing the federal budget deficit? Here, the news is very good for higher education. The general attitude is that political leaders should keep their hands off student assistance when cutting the federal deficit:

- 62 percent of registered voters oppose proposals to reduce the deficit and promote economic growth by limiting federal college grants and loans to all but the poor.[41]
- Only 11 percent of all Americans believe federal spending for loans and grants to students should be decreased; 42 percent think it should remain the same; and 46 percent support an increase.[42]

There may, of course, be an element of wishful thinking on the public's part. It is difficult to understand how competing public "wants"—deficit reduction, limits on taxation, and additional funding of services such as student aid, access to first-rate medicine, and child care—can be reconciled. In fact, the general public appears to recognize this difficulty and proposes a relatively painless way to reconcile its various demands. The public, according to a 1990 Gallup poll, believes that if more money is needed for student aid, policymakers should turn to wealthy people and corporations for the funds, before turning to taxpayers or parents.[43] According to this poll, about one-half of Americans (48 percent) prefer to soak the rich; only 29 percent are ready to ask taxpayers to foot the bill; and just 15 percent support increases in tuition.

To sum up the intertwined issues of public sentiment about the government's role in providing student aid and its sentiment about deficit reduction, recent polls reveal: (1) a national consensus in support of providing public financial assistance for every student who needs it; and (2) almost no public support at all—about one person in ten—for cutting student assistance. The unavoidable conclusion is that public opinion is higher education's ally in the effort to provide adequate student financial aid. This may, in fact, be one of the most significant findings from this poll review. Public support for student aid is overwhelming. Academic leaders should never lose sight of the advantage this provides.

National Service

As the 1990s dawned, public service emerged as a front-burner political issue and showed up repeatedly in this poll review because at the time the surveys were conducted, political candidates were taking public soundings on the issue.

The review revealed overwhelming support for linking federal student financial assistance, particularly loans, to some obligation to make repayment through either national service or paycheck deductions. At the same time, the review provides no evidence about whether the public understands the details of national service, or even cares about the details. But it is apparent

that Americans approve of the idea of national service, just as they supported the idea of the Peace Corps when it first was proposed by President Kennedy, or the VISTA program (Volunteers in Service to America) when announced by President Johnson.

This concept of giving something back to the community in return for college aid resonates very well with the American public. As Figure 7 indicates, no matter how the question was phrased, two-thirds or more of Americans supported a program that would provide college loans in return for national, public, or military service.

Figure 7
Perceptions About National Service

- 88 percent of Americans support low-interest loans that can be repaid through a public service job.[44]
- 82 percent believe the federal government should provide loans to students that can be repaid by paycheck deductions or two years of national service.[45]
- 69 percent support presidential candidates favoring college loans in return for either military or nonmilitary service to the nation.[46]

These survey items leave many questions unresolved, particularly in terms of the feasibility and costs of a national service program. But clearly the idea of such a program, as advanced by President Clinton in his campaign (and later enacted by Congress), enjoys strong public support.[47]

In fact, as the last finding in Figure 7 indicates, public support for candidates inclined to favor financial aid is very broad, cutting across economic lines. Indeed, a 1991 survey by Willard and Shulman reported that four out of five Americans (80 percent) say they are more likely to vote for a presidential candidate who proposed making college costs a tax deductible expense.[48] Unlike national service, this proposal probably will never see the light of day. The Treasury Department is highly unlikely to support a scheme that would put $200 billion or more of gross domestic product beyond its reach every April 15.

Conclusion

Several conclusions appear justified by these polling data.

First, the public has an impressive, sophisticated understanding of the actual and potential contributions of higher education to the nation's well-being. This understanding does not appear to be narrow. The public is aware of the national economic benefits provided by colleges and universities. It is aware of the financial returns individuals receive from college attendance. It understands the contributions of academic science and technology. Perhaps most encouraging for academic leaders, the public also appears to appreciate the social benefits provided by higher education.

Huge majorities of the American people have very strong, positive feelings about academic institutions. Higher education continues to be a sort of sacred cow in American life. While public leaders may criticize it, people on Main Street still revere higher education, or at least the idea of it.

Second, the cost issue is a huge worry for most people. This review does not reveal how the public diagnoses the cost issue or whether it understands the causes of tuition hikes. That is, these poll results provide no guidance on whether the public has a cynical attitude about costs, believing, for example, that "waste, fraud, and abuse" are widespread; or whether it holds a more temperate view, believing, for example, that it simply costs a lot of money to manage one of these enterprises. If the latter view prevails—that it is expensive, but worth it—higher education is in pretty good shape. If the former perception holds sway—that cost increases are due to waste, fraud, and abuse—higher education clearly will face political difficulties.

Third, two huge public perceptions are in conflict with one another. The first perception is: "My children must go to college." The second is:

"I cannot afford to send them." This conflict leads to nearly universal consensus on the need for more financial aid across the board.

Fourth, the inescapable parallels between higher education costs and health care costs are far too close for comfort. The symmetry of issues in higher education with those in health care is quite precise. As with their perceptions of higher education, people believe that the quality of health care in the United States is without parallel. Americans know that access to health care is an essential public good and that everybody should be entitled to the benefits of the system. But they are convinced that health services are overpriced. Medical leaders throughout the 1980s insisted that the problem was one of perceptions, not of reality, and continued to manage health care with little regard to costs. The public solution, ultimately, was to insist on cost controls and to demand that government impose a cap on price increases.

Higher education faces precisely the same kind of issues. People believe that access to higher education is an essential public good today. They also believe they cannot afford the costs and that the services are overpriced and not a good value for the money.

Finally, the political situation for higher education is indeed volatile and tricky. The public could decide that the solution to the difficulties in higher education is the same as the solution in health care; citizens may encourage public leaders to focus their attention on the nation's colleges and universities after they have finished with hospitals and health care facilities. If this occurs, academic leaders will find themselves engulfed in the same political firestorm that physicians and medical leaders coped with in the early 1990s.

In fact, some indications can be seen that just such a firestorm is developing. Ample evidence already exists, not in polls but in daily newspapers, that opinion leaders are profoundly troubled about higher education. Concern among journalists, editorial writers, business leaders, and public officials has surpassed the public's concern about costs—and these leaders worry about a number of other issues regarding academic life.

Like the general public, opinion leaders are concerned about access, revenues, and expenditures. But if newspaper accounts accurately reflect their views, some opinion molders also believe that campuses are polarized by arguments about "political correctness." They think that faculty workloads are too light and that professors have abandoned teaching for research. They worry about troubling accounts of scientific fraud, financial irregularities, and excessive compensations for some campus and system administrators.

The view from Main Street, obviously, is quite different. For example, according to Princeton Survey Research Associates, only about half of all American adults have heard of the term "political correctness," and of those who have heard of the term, only 14 percent can define it properly.[49] Therefore, despite the enormous debate about political correctness that has consumed so much attention editorially and on campus, the issue scarcely occupies the public's consciousness.

But in policy terms, the public's lack of awareness is insignificant. The political correctness debate has registered on the radar screens of journalists and editors. The flight of tenured professors from the classroom has entered the consciousness of elected politicians. And financial irregularities and compensation issues in academia are topics of conversation among opinion leaders, in part because many—in both business and public life—must contend with the same criticisms themselves.

In short, higher education is politically vulnerable; indeed, it already has faced some trouble. The general public clearly is concerned about costs and value. Opinion leaders anxious to address their own concerns could use the cost issue to mobilize public opinion behind them. This is a risk that should not be discounted. In the political environment of the 1990s—with public officials at the federal, state, and local levels looking for ways to cut spending—academic institutions could suffer great abuse from the budget axe before the public begins to worry about the financial health of the academic enterprise.

In this context, higher education leaders could learn from the experiences of their medical colleagues. The health care industry discovered—contrary to the original belief that the public does not know what it is talking about—that a legitimate public concern had been expressed that needed attention. No one—not government, not the American people, not academic institutions themselves—will benefit if higher education leaders insist that the problem is simply an issue of public perceptions that will disappear if only the public relations office can find the right strategy.

Appendix A

Endnotes

[1] Gallup, October 1990.
[2] Gallup, October 1990.
[3] Gallup, October 1990.
[4] Gallup, June 1990.
[5] Gallup, June 1990.
[6] Peter Hart, September 1991.
[7] Gallup, October 1991.
[8] Gallup, June 1990.
[9] Gallup, June 1990.
[10] Gallup, June 1990.
[11] Roper, June 1992.
[12] Gallup, June 1990.
[13] Gallup, June 1990.
[14] Gallup, June 1990.
[15] Harris, October 1991.
[16] Marttila and Kiley, November 1991.
[17] Peter Hart, September 1991.
[18] *Time*, CNN/Yankelovich, Clancy, Shulman, June 1990.
[19] Gallup, September 1989.
[20] NBC News, August 1989.
[21] Roper, May 1990.
[22] ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 1991.
[23] Gallup, April 1991.
[24] National Opinion Research Center, February 1990.
[25] National Opinion Research Center, September 1990.

[26] See "A New Beginning for a New Century: Intercollegiate Athletics in the United States." (Final Report of the Knight Foundation Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics), Miami: John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, March 1993.
[27] See "A New Beginning for a New Century."
[28] National Family Opinion Research, February 1990.
[29] Willard and Shulman, June–August 1991.
[30] Princeton Survey Research Associates, May 1992.
[31] Gallup, November 1989.
[32] ABC News/*Washington Post*, January 1990.
[33] Princeton Survey Research Associates, May 1992.
[34] ABC News/*Washington Post*, December 1991.
[35] Princeton Survey Research Associates, September 1990.
[36] Gallup, September 1989.
[37] Gallup, September 1989.
[38] Gallup, September 1989.
[39] Gallup, February 1989.
[40] CBS News, February 1989.
[41] Gallup, September 1992.
[42] ABC News/*Washington Post*, August 1989.
[43] Gallup, June 1990.
[44] Gallup, September 1992.
[45] CBS News/*New York Times*, January 1992.
[46] Gallup, January 1992.
[47] In the first year of the Clinton administration, Congress enacted an ambitious program to provide vouchers to college students in return for national service.
[48] Willard and Shulman, October 1991.
[49] Princeton Survey Research Associates, May 1992.

Appendix B

Selected Public Opinion Polls

ABC News/*Washington Post* Poll

Survey Organization:	ABC News/*Washington Post*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,509
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	August 17, 1989
Ending Date:	August 21, 1989
Date of Source Document:	August 1989

ABC News/*Washington Post* Poll

Survey Organization:	ABC News/*Washington Post*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,011
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	September 6, 1990
Ending Date:	September 9, 1990
Date of Source Document:	September 1990

ABC News/*Washington Post* Poll

Survey Organization:	ABC News/*Washington Post*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,511
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	May 30, 1991
Ending Date:	June 2, 1991
Date of Source Document:	June 3, 1991

ABC News/*Washington Post* Poll

Survey Organization:	ABC News/*Washington Post*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,000
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	October 9, 1991
Ending Date:	October 13, 1991
Date of Source Document:	December 6, 1991

Americans and Their Money

Survey Organization:	Willard and Schulman
Research Sponsor:	*Money Magazine*
Population:	National—household financial decision makers
Population Size:	1,000
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	October 22, 1991
Ending Date:	October 30, 1991
Date of Source Document:	October 1991

Attitudes about American Colleges, 1990

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,014
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	June 11, 1990
Ending Date:	June 17, 1990
Date of Source Document:	October 12, 1990

Attitudes about American Colleges, 1991

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,012
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	June 10, 1991
Ending Date:	June 16, 1991
Date of Source Document:	October 11, 1991

Attitudes toward Public Schools

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Phi Delta Kappa
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,584
Interview Method:	Personal
Beginning Date:	May 5, 1989
Ending Date:	June 11, 1989
Date of Source Document:	September 1989

Black/*USA Today* Poll

Survey Organization:	Gordon S. Black Corporation
Research Sponsor:	*USA Today*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	806
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	December 9, 1991
Ending Date:	December 10, 1991
Date of Source Document:	December 1991

CBS News Poll

Survey Organization:	CBS News
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,445
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	February 2, 1989
Ending Date:	February 5, 1989
Date of Source Document:	February 9, 1989

CBS News/*New York Times* Poll

Survey Organization:	CBS News/*New York Times*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,283
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	April 1, 1991
Ending Date:	April 3, 1991
Date of Source Document:	April 1991

CBS News/*New York Times* Poll

Survey Organization:	CBS News/*New York Times*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,281
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	January 22, 1992
Ending Date:	January 25, 1992
Date of Source Document:	January 27, 1992

Competitiveness

Survey Organization:	Peter Hart
Research Sponsor:	The Council on Competitiveness
Population:	National registered voters
Population Size:	1,003
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	September 1991
Ending Date:	September 1991
Date of Source Document:	September 1991

The Democrats: 1990–92

Survey Organization:	Analysis Group (Greenberg-Lake and Garin-Hart)
Research Sponsor:	Democrats for the 90s
Population:	National registered voters
Population Size:	1,494
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	February 26, 1990
Ending Date:	March 1, 1990
Date of Source Document:	March 1990

Gallup Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,234
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	October 5, 1989
Ending Date:	October 8, 1989
Date of Source Document:	October 9, 1989

Gallup Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,234
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	November 16, 1989
Ending Date:	November 19, 1989
Date of Source Document:	January 1, 1990

Gallup Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,235
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	December 7, 1989
Ending Date:	December 10, 1989
Date of Source Document:	December 20, 1989

Gallup Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	990
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	June 13, 1991
Ending Date:	June 16, 1991
Study Note:	Includes oversample of 303 African Americans
Date of Source Document:	June 1991

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Gallup Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,011
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	November 7, 1991
Ending Date:	November 10, 1991
Date of Source Document:	November 1991

Gallup/CNN/*USA Today* Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Cable News Network, *USA Today*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,421
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	January 6, 1992
Ending Date:	January 9, 1992
Study Note:	Includes oversample of 206 African Americans
Date of Source Document:	January 16, 1992

Gallup/CNN/*USA Today* Poll

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Cable News Network, *USA Today*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,441
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	September 11, 1992
Ending Date:	September 15, 1992
Date of Source Document:	September 1992

General Social Survey, 1990

Survey Organization:	National Opinion Research Center
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,372
Interview Method:	Personal
Beginning Date:	February 1990
Ending Date:	April 1990
Date of Source Document:	September 1990

Harris Poll

Survey Organization:	Louis Harris and Associates
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,256
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	May 5, 1991
Ending Date:	May 15, 1991
Date of Source Document:	June 2, 1991

***Los Angeles Times* Poll**

Survey Organization:	*Los Angeles Times*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	2,434
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	January 8, 1991
Ending Date:	January 12, 1991
Date of Source Document:	February 1, 1991

***Newsweek* Poll**

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	*Newsweek*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	924
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	April 23, 1991
Ending Date:	April 25, 1991
Study Note:	Survey included an African American oversample
Date of Source Document:	April 29, 1991

People, The Press, and Politics 1989

Survey Organization:	Gallup Organization
Research Sponsor:	Times Mirror
Population:	National Adult
Population Size:	2,048
Interview Method:	Personal
Beginning Date:	January 27, 1989
Ending Date:	February 5, 1989
Date of Source Document:	March 1989

People, The Press, and Politics 1990

Survey Organization:	Princeton Survey Research Associates
Research Sponsor:	Times Mirror
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	3,004
Interview Method:	Personal
Beginning Date:	May 1, 1990
Ending Date:	May 31, 1990
Date of Source Document:	September 19, 1990

Princeton Survey Research Associates/*US News & World Report*

Survey Organization:	Princeton Survey Research Associates
Research Sponsor:	*US News and World Report*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,200
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	May 3, 1992
Ending Date:	May 7, 1992
Date of Source Document:	May 1992

Public Attitudes toward People with Disabilities

Survey Organization:	Louis Harris and Associates
Research Sponsor:	National Organization on Disability
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,257
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	May 15, 1991
Ending Date:	June 18, 1991
Date of Source Document:	June 1991

Racial Attitudes and Consciousness Exam

Survey Organization:	NBC News
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,500
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	August 3, 1989
Ending Date:	August 13, 1989
Study Note:	Separate African American oversample of 381 adults

School Reform: Public Perceptions

Survey Organization:	Louis Harris and Associates
Research Sponsor:	*Agenda Magazine*
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,252
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	October 29, 1991
Ending Date:	November 30, 1991

Special Consumer Survey Report

Survey Organization:	National Family Opinion Research
Research Sponsor:	Conference Board
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	7,000
Interview Method:	Mail
Beginning Date:	February 1990
Ending Date:	February 1990
Date of Source Document:	February 1990

Survey of Public Attitudes in the United States and Japan

Survey Organization:	Marttila and Kiley
Research Sponsor:	*Detroit Free Press* and Tokyo/ Chunichi Shimbun
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,001
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	November 3, 1991
Ending Date:	November 5, 1991
Date of Source Document:	December 2, 1991

***Time*/CNN Survey**

Survey Organization:	Yankelovich, Clancy ,Shulman
Research Sponsor:	*Time*, Cable News Network
Population:	National—ages 18–29
Population Size:	602
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	June 13, 1990
Ending Date:	June 17, 1990
Date of Source Document:	July 13, 1990

***Time*/CNN Survey**

Survey Organization:	Yankelovich, Clancy, Shulman
Research Sponsor:	*Time*, Cable News Network
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,500
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	December 17, 1991
Ending Date:	December 22, 1991
Date of Source Document:	December 1991

Times Mirror Magazines National Environmental Forum Survey

Survey Organization:	Roper Organization
Research Sponsor:	Times Mirror
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,200
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	February 28, 1992
Ending Date:	March 10, 1992
Date of Source Document:	June 1992

Times Mirror News Interest Index May 1991

Survey Organization:	Princeton Survey Research Associates
Research Sponsor:	Times Mirror
Population:	National adult
Population Size:	1,206
Interview Method:	Telephone
Beginning Date:	May 16, 1991
Ending Date:	May 19, 1991
Date of Source Document:	May 23, 1991

Virginia Slims American Women's Poll, 1989

Survey Organization:	Roper Organization
Research Sponsor:	Virginia Slims
Population:	National, women and men
Population Size:	4,000
Interview Method:	Personal
Beginning Date:	July 22, 1989
Ending Date:	August 12, 1989
Study Note:	Includes 3,000 women and 1,000 men
Date of Source Document:	August 1989

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